

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05

/088 W

-----119426 091058Z /13-12

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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7051

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE JOHANNESBURG 3268

DEPT PLEASE PASS OECD CAPITALS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EINV, SF

SUBJECT: URBAN FOUNDATION CODE MADE PUBLIC

REF: JOHANNESBURG 3205

1. SUMMARY: THE URBAN FOUNDATION CODE WAS MADE PUBLIC ON DECEMBER 7 WITH THE SUPPORT OF NINETY PERCENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL EMPLOYERS. THE CODE IS BEING PRESENTED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE MORE RIGOROUS AND EXPLICIT EC AND SULLIVAN CODES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYERS' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AFFAIRS (SACCOLA) REPRESENTING NINETY PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES, ENDORSED THE URBAN FOUNDATION'S CODE OF EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE. SIGNATORIES ARE COMMITTED: "TO STRIVE CONSTANTLY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF
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DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE OR COLOR FROM ALL ASPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE; TO PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN THROUGH CONTACT AND CONSULTATION SOUND AND HARMONIOUS RELATIONS BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND ALL CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYEES;
TO CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH OTHER ORGANIZATION IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN PROMOTING THE ACCELERATED CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND WAGE RATES AIMED AT THE MAIN-

TENANCE OF VIABLE LIVING STANDARDS." THE CODE ALSO PLEDGES TO STRIVE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN PAY, PENSIONS, MEDICAL AID, LEAVE, SICK PAY EMPLOYEE INSURANCE, ASSISTANCE WITH HOUSING AND ALL OTHER FACILITIES.

3. IN ANNOUNCING THE CODE, MR. JUSTICE J.H. STEYN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN FOUNDATION, WAS CRITICAL OF ATTEMPTS BY OTHER COUNTRIES (EC AND SULLIVAN MANIFESTO) TO PRESCRIBE CODES FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES OPERATING IN SOUTH AFRICA. CHRIS DUTOIT, CHAIRMAN OF SACCOLA, SAID PUBLICLY THAT "IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO COMPEL COMPANIES TO OBSERVE THE CODE AND THAT MONITORING THE SYSTEM WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION".

4. COMMENT: THE URBAN FOUNDATION CODE IS BEING USED AS AN INSTRUMENT TO DEFLECT EXTERNAL ATTEMPTS TO ENCOURAGE MOVEMENT AWAY FROM DISCRIMINATION IN THE EMPLOYMENT FIELD. (THE SWISS AND AUSTRALIANS ARE ALSO UNDERSTOOD TO BE PREPARING STATEMENTS SIMILAR TO THE EC AND SULLIVAN CODES.) DESPITE THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF STEYN AND DUTOIT, A SOURCE CLOSE TO THE LATTER, AS WELL AS THE ORIGINAL PROPONENT OF THE URBAN FOUNDATION CODE, TONY BLOOM, ADVISED BOTH BLOOM AND DUTOIT WERE AT ONE STAGE PREPARED TO RESIGN FROM THE FOUNDATION OVER THIS ISSUE. BLOOM AND DUTOIT HAD HOPED THE FOUNDATION CODE WOULD BE SEEN AS COMPLEMENTARY RATHER THAN AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE EC AND SULLIVAN CODES.

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